

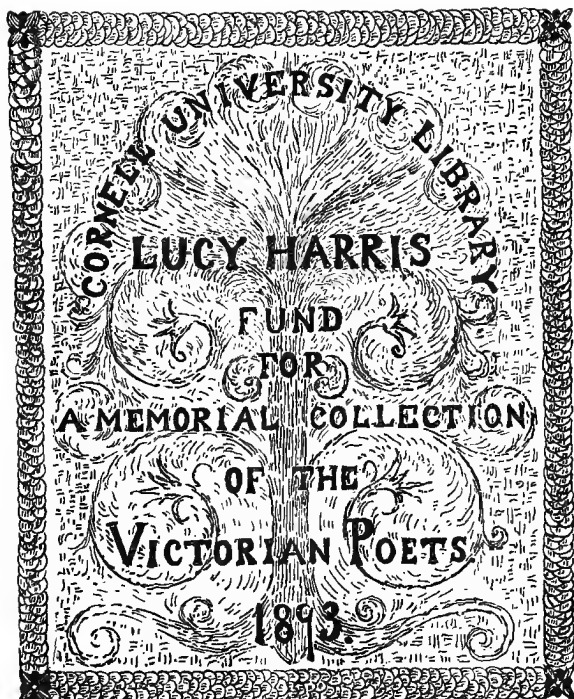


Scribblings on

Autumn Leaves.

M. BALL.





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SCRIBBLINGS
ON
AUTUMN LEAVES.

SCRIBBLINGS
ON
AUTUMN LEAVES

BY
MARIA BALL

London :

PRINTED BY GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, LD.

ST. JOHN'S HOUSE, CLERKENWELL ROAD

1888

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHRONICLES OF THE CASTLE—	
Pictures in the Modern Drawing-Room	1
Pictures in the Haunted Chamber	8
Pictures in the Summer Parlour	13
Cloudland	17
In the Good Time coming	19
Recollections of a Visit to the Cliffs of Moher, Co. Clare	21
The Baby of the House.—A Fifth Son	25
A Dream of Melrose Abbey	27
Vashti's Decision	31
Near Damascus	33
Bethany Scenes	35
Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men	37
Song.—The Secret	38
Song.—Elysium	40
Song.—Think, Love, of Me	43
L'Embaras	44
Wirasthrue.—An Irish Song	46
Song.—Waiting Angels	48
To my favourite Flower—the Cowslip	49
Uriel's Visit	51
The Mirthful Bee	55
The Mourner's Song	57
Hold Thou me up	58
Song.—“Gone Before”	60
Song.—“Expectation”	61
A Summer's Dream	63

	PAGE
The Widow's Lament	65
Resignation	67
A Heavenly Visitant	69
A Psalm of Winter	74
An Evening Dream	76
Degrees of Beauty	78
Our Forefathers.—The Noble Army of Martyrs	79
Our Christmas Casket	81

CHRONICLES OF THE CASTLE.

PICTURES IN THE MODERN DRAWING-ROOM.

VIOLET eyes and shining hair,
Peach-like cheeks and smiling air,
With youth and hope of future glory,
Combine to paint a precious story ;
A winning, winsome, wilful way,
A parent's joy in twilight grey,
Or when the sunset gilds the sea,
Or moonlight silvers o'er the lea.
A voice that sings when drift the clouds,
And all the world a darkness shrouds,
No thought beyond the moment e'er
To cloud a life that's debonair—
Outspoken words, no wish to hide
The thoughts that in the heart abide,
Nor depth of growth, nor thoughts that burn,
Nor hopes that into ashes turn !
Oh ! violet eyes and shining hair,
Peach-like cheeks and smiling air,
With youth and hope of future glory

Combined to paint fond parent's story.
 Is there an eye that looks on thee,
 And reads a far futurity?—
 One picture—Now the curtain raise,
 Upon these other features gaze ;
 All there—eyes, mouth, and nose,
 Fair cheeks without one touch of rose,
 Nor youthful gawd, nor hope of glory,
 To flash upon a life's young story ;—
 A silent voice that fain would sing,
 And singing soar—with broken wing ;
 A stifled spirit still and lone,
 A voice that did not cry nor moan.—
 A tender voice that spake of love,
 An eye that cleft the heights above,
 A home in Cloudland far away ;
 A place on earth to kneel and pray,
 A Friend to love, a hand to hold,
 With firmest clasp her own to fold.—
 Was there an eye to look on thee,
 And read thy far futurity?—

* * * * *

The way was long, the road was bare,
 Wild flowers and grasses flourished there ;
 The robin twittered on the hedge,
 Up rose the lark from reed and sedge ;

A cosy thrush sat on her nest,
 Where speckled eggs securely rest.
 Is yon a blackbird flitting by,
 Or luckless magpie do I spy ?
 Wild strawberries upon the bank
 Are gleaming midst the grasses rank,
 And hawthorn branches scent the air,
 With whited petals falling there.
 Along the road two children walk,
 Whiling the way with childlike talk
 Of blackberries, and beasts, and birds,
 Of strawberries, and cream, and curds.—
 Father says this, mother says that,
 And “we have got a man called Pat.”
 There’s fishes swimmin’ in the dyke,
 I’d like to catch them on a spike.
 There is no fish, father says no—
 Father says no, it can’t be so ;
 But only leeches, toads, and frogs,
 And dirty water off the bogs.—
 Here’s mother coming, let us run
 To meet her, that will be good fun.
 Oh ! violet eyes and shining hair,
 Oh ! rosy cheeks and smiling air,
 Combined with hope of future glory
 To gaily paint a parent’s story.—

Is there an eye that looks on thee,
And reads a far futurity ?

* * * * *

Unvext by earth's turmoil, love's fret, or life's care,
Down life's common pathway, treads Myra the fair ;
And young men and old men they all pass her by,
For he who would love her hath not come a-nigh.

Then she thinks of her father, and longs for the
time

She may meet him she loves in the heavenly clime.

And now she has quitted the country so green,
'Midst the turmoil and gossip of town she is seen ;
Each scandal that's whispered and carried about,
At one ear it enters, at the other goes out.

For she said, My dear father revealed not again
Any mischievous story that caused others pain.

She fain would be useful, be good, and be wise,
Spread joy o'er the earth and train truth for the skies,
For her call to the vineyard she patiently waits,
And pulls up the weeds that she finds near the gates.

And she thinks, My dear father worked well in the
field ;

If I'm called but at evening, my thanks I will
yield.

And now she is woo'd and now is a wife
 To one who has vowed he would love her for life ;
 But alas for the love that is born of earth,
 This died and was buried the year of its birth.

Then she thinks of her Father, and longs she could
 fly

To her home on His bosom beyond yonder sky.

It is good for each pilgrim who passeth along
 To have some bright glintings of joy and of song :
 Though Myra ne'er knew it, from childhood's blest day
 She carried this talisman with her for aye.

Thus helped by the father who's gone to his rest,
 She patiently waits yet and hopes for the best.

* * * * *

Upon a mountain path on high,
 When sunrise tints the morning sky,
 E'er fair Aurora takes her way
 O'er smiling plains and valleys grey,
 A man and maiden seek a rest
 Upon the mountain's snowy crest.

He speaks,—

' For I know that my Redeemer liveth,
 And tho' after my skin worms destroy this body,
 Yet in my flesh I shall see God,—
 Then I shall be like Him, for I shall see Him as He is.'

'Like Him'—the great Artificer who poured
 The waters from the hollow of His hand ;
 Whose Spirit moved upon those waters wide.
 Who gave command, " Let there be light,"
 Where erstwhile in the semi-darkness dwelt,
 Disporting in the tepid ooze,
 Those mighty monsters of primeval times,
 'Midst spreading beds of algæ swaying there.
 Who framed the fair blue firmament,
 To divide the waters from the waters,
 Where soft brown sea-buds float upon the tide.
 At whose command majestic mountains
 Heaved their heads above the waste,
 And the great waters sank into the valleys
 With mighty thunderings—
 And all the hill-tops round about,
 Bareheaded stood before their King.—
 'Like Him' in power to view earth's hard per-
 plexities,
 And calmly count the cost, looking unto the end.
 'Like Him' to own that from all bitter roots
 Struck deep in human gore and watered by salt tears,
 And disappointments sore and hope deferred,
 And sin and lust and war and famine's blight,
 And infantile mortality, spring up such plants
 As patience, fortitude, longsuffering, gentleness,

Most fitting flowers to grace God's garden fair,
 To teach us 'tis the Spirit quickeneth,
 The flesh nothing profiteth.—

'Like Him'—

My Father, no man hath seen God at any time and
 none can be "like Him!"—

Dear Father, like unto my Saviour I would be,
 A living, loving, lowly friend—but glad,
 I would not choose a life so very sad !
 Oh say, then, may I not rejoice with thee
 To view yon mighty mountains in their majesty ?
 Thou sayest well, my Lillian, in all things fair
 Do thou rejoice, now in thy life's young hour,
 Fair as thou art and dear unto a parent's heart,
 Standing upon this hill-top of thy life.

My steps unto the valley tend :

Say when they touch the chilling shades beneath,
 Wilt thou in thy strong womanhood stand by
 To guide me to the margin of those waters cold,
 Thro' which we each must pass alone
 To reach yon shining shore ?—

And then, when thy life too is done, my child,
 Wilt seek for me in yon fair realms of bliss ?
 For e'en methinks in God's own Heaven,
 Thy gentle presence I should miss.

CHRONICLES OF THE CASTLE.

PICTURES IN THE HAUNTED CHAMBER.

SIR Rupert's love for Imogine
Had grown thro' shine and shower,
Her friend and playmate he had been,
E'en from her childhood's hour ;
A man of cultured taste, withal,
A soldier strong and square,
And kind was he and genial,
As Imogine was fair.
A lonely orphan child she'd been,
Her guardian grim, no doubt,
And all her wealth of love, I ween,
For Rupert was poured out.
He had as elder brother been,
Through childhood's hours so fleet,
But now the maid was seventeen,
Shy, sensitive, and sweet ;
A creature gentle as a fawn,
And gay as a gazelle,—

A dewdrop lingering at dawn,
Within the lily's bell.
Grim war now showed her scowling face,
And waved her banner red,
And England's sons of noble race,
Their followers must lead ;
Sir Rupert on the plains of Gaul,
Fought valiantly and well,
His followers brave whose loss was small,
Went home the news to tell,
Our knight now roamed in torrid zones,
O'er plains of spotless snow,
Or pillowed him where Bashan's stones,
Their giant shadows throw.
And every picture of a saint,
And every beauty seen,
And every thought of home content,
Transfigured Imogine—
A pictured Virgin, fair Helene,
A mother or a child,
A cultured woman, conscience keen,
A maiden meek and mild.
Tho' fairest most when he inspect,
Most dear where he descries,
Prismatic colours oft reflect
From sympathetic eyes.

Once more at home at evening's hour,
 When yule-logs light the Baron's hall,
 And health and plenty, wondrous dower,
 Their glamour throw o'er each and all.
 With joy doth Rupert view the maid
 And own he's chosen for his life,
 (Whose charms time can never fade)
 A modest English wife.
 Anon when troopers seek their lair,
 And Rupert 's for the night installed
 In this same chamber here,
 (With blazing hearth and carved bedstead)
 Sits now our cavalier.
 Beside a pile of embers bright,
 Which light the chamber here and there
 With moving shades of ghostly white,
 O'er darkest cornice tapestry, where
 With patient skill the story 's told,
 Of Mordecai and Esther fair
 By little hands now still and cold—
 He dreams, but thought fleets not to-day
 To maids or mothers far away.
 Some one is here and fain would stay,
 Looks up at him and sings a lay;
 In softened tones their voices blend
 Till his dear smile his lips distend—

“ Heigh ho ! I love you so !

Oh my love, my precious treasure,
Gold with love can never measure !

Heigh ho ! I love you so !

Oh my little one so lonely—
Loves me best and loves me only.

Heigh ho ! I love you so !

Oh my guardian angel, sent
To give to me my heart's content.

Heigh ho !—hush, just outside the lattice dark,
Are branches swaying, tossing, hark !—
Sweet angel, sing that word again,
Did ever breezes chaunt ‘ Amen ’ ? ”

Sir Rupert to the window strode,
A lattice which did open broad
And night-winds in a cooling flood,
Moved his dark tresses as he stood.
The moon behind an ebon rack,
Calmly pursues her shining track,
Except when with her full bright eye
She stares one moment from the sky—
“ Hail, emblem of my peerless Queen !
My pure, my priceless Imogine,
Why hide thyself, my lady love,
All silver-feathered as the dove,”
Quoth Rupert e'er the lattice close,

He lays him down to seek repose.
 But first a Paternoster said
 And crossed himself and blessed his bed,—
 For mostly all in those old days
 Were reared in mystic Romish ways.
 Yet he had oft a Bible seen,
 Oft scanned its living words, I ween ;
 And he had heard while yet a child
 Of gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
 And in his heart, all chaste and pure,
 The dear tale did through life endure.
 Sweet was the thought he loved to dwell
 On her who did the story tell,
 His mother, with her beauty rare,
 Meek wife of one Sir Thomas Blair.
 Where had she found the precious pearl
 Whilst yet an innocent young girl,
 This chronicle it doth not tell :
 But, it is said, she loved it well,
 And to her darling boy oft told
 The worth of that sweet story old.
 And thus there happ'd (and free of "cant")
 True oneness with a Protestant ;—
 'Twixt Rupert and his bride, I mean,
 For such was Lady Imogene.

M. A. B.

CHRONICLES OF THE CASTLE.

PICTURES IN THE SUMMER PARLOUR.

AZURE eyes and tresses golden,
 Gentle maid to love beholden,
 All his holy halo shed
 Round a young and dainty head ;
 Sylph-like, she doth take her way,
 Glinting o'er the grassy brae ;
 She can see till shadows dark
 Cleave the pathway with a mark.
 Little recketh Christobel
 Lilting lightly thro' the dell,
 " Father, noble father dear,
 Owning love but never fear,
 Christobel is ever lone
 Since father to the wars is gone ;
 Mother, sweetest mother mine,
 Resting in thy snowy shrine,
 Oh, this heart would break in twain,
 Did I not know we'll meet again !

Angel-brother to me left,
 Of a mother's care bereft,
 Babe so loving, loved so fondly,
 Christobel will watch o'er thee ;—
 And oh my Robin, cousin dear,
 This heart beats fast midst hope and fear ; —
 In thinking of thy love for me,
 Thy Christobel is filled with glee,
 Thy bright example saves from fears
 And safe with thee my path appears.
 To see thy faith so strong and pure
 My weaker spirit doth inure
 To live throughout this troublous hour
 Upheld by thee, thy manhood's power,
 Upon the Rock of Ages based :—
 The Rock ne'er shattered, tho' defaced,
 Will hide for age the feeble flock—
 I nestle 'neath this sheltering Rock,
 Whilst thou dost stand with banner high
 Unfurled beneath a wintry sky,—
 Or in thy very heart at rest
 I'd build for me a leafy nest.”
 She starts ; she listens ; but 'tis naught,
 Only some bird, like sudden thought,
 Flits o'er the path from tree to tree
 As ends the maiden's reverie.

A pale rose lately she hath been,
Behold the damask's little queen !

* * * * * *

Alas, fair face !—what see we here ?

A pallet on a truckle based,

A man, a maiden, sit thereon,

A book between them placed ;

He reads therefrom—

And guardian angels in that place

Unlock for them the fount of grace,

For ever at such times of need

These heavenly beings earthward speed,

To minister to glory's heirs,

To soothe their anguish, calm their fears.

To help them witness for their Lord,

Altho' cast out, betrayed, abhorred ;

Else the poor quivering flesh would quake,

And e'en their blessed Lord forsake.

When face to face with death they stand

By torture slow or fire-brand.—

And beauty comes, a wondrous dower

Of the Creator's subtle power ;

At slightest stirring of His hand

Cerulean circling tints expand,

Light the loved eyes we gently close,

And rest on marble lips and brows,

The spirit passing percolates
The strong man's soul, and like a child,
No more self-trustful, self-beguiled,
He owns his weakness, feels his need
On Christ the Bread of Life to feed.
Let tyrants work their wicked will,
The jewels are resplendent still !
Like Christobel and Robert Blake
Led forth to perish at the stake,
By weak Queen Mary's harsh command,
When she was reigning o'er the land.

M. A. B.



CLOUDLAND.

THE dancing sunbeams round me played
As I sought the forest's colonnade,
By its leafy shade at fullest noon,
Entoned to the light of the pure pale moon,
For morn's sadness around me lay ;
I would while it in fancy's realms away.
And oh ! more dear to the wayworn one,
Is the gentle moon than the blazing sun.—
I scanned each pine-tree's steeple high,
With every tiny cross on the sky ;
And I marked a small white cloud in heaven,
As it sailed aloft o'er my steeples seven.
Fair shred of some robe of heavenly woof,
Wafting across the azure roof
Of this silent spot of lonely ground,
With never a robin to hop around ;
Mid crackling branches and tufty grass
Springs the feathery moss o'er which I pass,
Where the dead leaves lie, o'er the dead years gone,
I'll sit me down on this mossy stone,
For 'tis here in these deepest wilds to-day
I would bury my load of care away ;

Where heaves each mouldering heap the greenest,
 I would lay each skeleton to rest.—
 But alack ! for my little cloudlet white,
 It has passed away from my dazzled sight :—
 Begone, ye troubles around me lying,
 I must find it again e'er day is dying ;
 For what recks the future or long-past pain,
 If I lose the beauty of present gain ?
 Far above this smooth and em'rald ring,
 Shut in by waves of each blossoming thing,
 The only one on a lucid waste,
 Lies my little cloud so pure and chaste.
 Methought there stood on its bosom white,
 With a golden harp, an angel bright !
 Oh ! wondrous harper of wondrous art,
 Who did catch each sigh from the weary heart,
 And each sad minor note begun,
 He touched and tuned till Heaven's gate rung.
 With such cunning skill did he tune the strain,
 Each discord ended in sweet refrain ;
 And ever from morn till eve was played
 The saddest music undismayed,
 So sweet it grew that spirits fair,
 At Heaven's gate who listening were,
 Caught up the strain and carried the song,
 E'en unto the courts of the Holy One.

IN THE GOOD TIME COMING.

WE shall rest by the riverside,
 Where the grass grows green and long,
 And far away through the light and shade
 Is filled a measure of song ;
 With only the heart of a child, my dear,
 And a body that's free from pain,
 And never a care on our minds, my dear,
 Or a sigh that is all in vain !

Then away from our lonely lair,
 'Neath the blue and downy sky,
 And away to reach the hollyhocks fair,
 That grow up so tall and so high ;
 With only the heart of a child, my dear,
 And a body that's free from pain,
 And never a care on our minds, my dear,
 Or a sigh that is all in vain !

Then after a night of blest rest,—
 To climb the distant hills,
 To scale the peak of the eagle's nest,
 And to track the tumbling rills ;

With but the brave heart of youth, my love,
And a body that's free from pain,
And never a care on our minds, my love,
Or a sigh that is all in vain !

M. A. B.

Text—Is. xl. 30, 31.

Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall ; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up as eagles ; they shall run, and not be weary ; they shall walk, and not faint.

Copied Sunday, March 20, 1887. Written about 1874.



RECOLLECTIONS OF A VISIT TO THE CLIFFS OF MOHER, CO. CLARE.

To suit the exigencies of rhyme, I have written the name
 “More,” as it is pronounced—“more” being the Irish for
 “great.”

BESIEGED by billows, dashed by foam,
 Where brown weeds hang o'er the sea-birds' home.
 With strong feet bedded in the strand,
 And sturdy back against the land—
 Thy children ranged on either side,
 A pattern to the world so wide :—
 To errant fancy thou art seen,
 A grisly sphinx of curious mien,
 Out-looking o'er the broad Atlantic,
 With sleek green back and front gigantic,
 Or mammoth petrified of yore,
 Thou'rt couched amidst the mists,
Old More !—

Like tender father o'er his child,
 Thou showest now a visage mild ;
 And waves, like children decked with white,

Are coursing o'er thee free and bright ;
 Now running up thy knee to seek,
 Now flashing gaily down yon creek,
 Now fain would reach thy rugged breast—
 Find to themselves a moment's rest.
 For childhood sheltered thus at home,
 I'd liken to the soft white foam,
 That gently laves the bosom hoar,
 And bathes, with beauty famed,
 Old More !—

A mystic garment soft with rains,
 Enwrappeth now thy lone domains,
 Green is thy mantle, sparkled by streams,
 As bright as distant ocean's gleams.
 And seemest thou thy tears to trace,
 Where brooklets trickle down thy face,
 Maid-like, lamenting o'er the brave,
 Who lowly lie beneath the wave ;
 Or transient as a hypocrite,
 Thou smilest bland and sweet—
 Or frownest at the waves' uproar
 As fitful as myself.

Old More !—

Now breasting brave the broad Atlantic,

Swept by billows wild and frantic,
 Like the wicked, striving still
 To work out their cruel will,
 Thou an upright human soul,
 Patient mid relentless roll,
 Of a mad world's persecution,
 Suffering, waiting restitution,
 For each rent and reef of beauty,
 Borne at the post of duty.
 Thus the righteous evermore,
 In God's strength are kept,
Like More !—

Like to birds upon thy strand,
 Free, sailing at their own command,
 Thus would my God-given soul
 Own none other to control ;—
 None but He can guide me still,
 O'er each rolling wave of ill ;
 None but He can see each rock,
 And shelter from the tempest's shock.
 There my nest is fixed on high,
 I can soar unto the sky,
 Like free birds upon thy shore,
 Is my soul for Evermore !—

Now, grand old place, ere I'm away
One giddy peep, and then good day,
Peering to thy fringed feet,
Where the cliffs the waters meet
Yon treacherous green upon the stone,
I'd liken unto some I've known,
A slippery path to paint with beauty,
To such makes up the sum of duty,
Though weeds may drift, they cling the more,
When lightnings flash and tempests roar,
And ever on thy steadfast shore,
They cling around thee,

Patient More !—



THE BABY OF THE HOUSE.—A FIFTH
SON.

CLINGING arms, rosy face,
All an infant's artless grace,
Here and there and everywhere,
Bearing not one grain of care ;
From daybreak unto dim twilight,
Each day to thee is a delight,
Little George !

Mammy's pet—he is a pearl,
'Pity he is not a girl,'
People say this little man
Should be Sophy, Kate, or Fan.
But mother's satisfied, dear boy,
Thou art her treasure and her joy,
Little George !

Gentle darling, little child,
With pearly skin and eyes so mild,
Angelic beauty thou dost wear,

For this poor world at times too fair ;
'Tis comfort, if the ink you spill,
Or answer " Don't " with " Yes me will ! "

Little George.

Oh ! gladly, Georgie, would I be,
Or own, a little babe like thee,
Accept thy love as my true right,
And live throughout thy young delight,
To build your grotto now and then,
And train you after noble men !

Little George.



A DREAM OF MELROSE ABBEY.

LIST ! it is music stealing thro' the vaulted height ;
 With chaste kiss breathing 'midst the fair and fretted
 stones,

And seemingly with living power fain would wake
 To life and love some dull grey effigy—
 Of saint or nun—or dame or knight.

How speak those sweet and dulcet sounds,
 Now louder swelling up the dim cathedral aisles :
 Unto the ear attuned to seek for heavenly utterances
 'Mid sounds of earth.

“Nunc dimittis, Magnificat, Deus misereatur,”

See ! 'midst the train of monks, in cassock grey,
 With shaven crown, approaching now
 From out the cloister door ; who wear
 The portly mien and rosy unctuous cheek
 Of well-fed ease and earth's content :

There's one—a reverend man and meek—
 Spirit triumphant o'er the weakly flesh,
 Around whose holy brow beameth a light of heaven
 That plays within his lambent eye of blue—

And pure health sits upon his bronzed and worn
 cheek.

And as they come sounds out a little bell, above the
 din

Of martial feet and armour's clang,

As it would say : "Weak things hath God chosen."

And now, behold ! a goodly company of English
 knights file in,

To peal of martial music, trumpets' blare !

A King, too, and his mighty men are here !

And see, the Father Abbot, in his priestly robes,

Before the altar stands : and mass is said—

"Nunc dimittis, Magnificat, Deus Misereatur :"

The King of Scotland and his mighty men

Within one transept range around.

Above Saint Peter and Saint Paul (in stone)

And opposite are Britain's barons bold,

Presided o'er by "Bridget," Queen of Irish Saints,

Who has her station high upon the eastern wall.

Again that silver bell sounds clear,—

"Things that are naught, things that are naught,

Weak things hath God chosen."

And with it fades this gorgeous show,

And all the portly company of monks,

And barons bold from England—casqued and
 plumed,

All glittering in their shining mail—
 Grow dim—and fade like some dissolving view.

* * * * *

And now methinks I am alone with night,
 Dread Queen of Horrors ! who encamps on graves ;
 Tenant of tombs, who sits on stones ;
 And with her cold breath wreaths around the massive
 slabs :

Hiding in corners from the wooing of the pure cold
 moon,

Just touching with her silvery fingers, o'er the kind
 Clustering ivy, that softly drapes yon crumbling
 wall,

And seems to mourn in deepest black, bedecked with
 white,

All the true glories of departed years !
 Standing like spectral statues now apart,
 In solemn contrast with this shallow tinselled time.

And now fair morning flushes in the east,
 With kindly eye the sun looks down

To chase dark night's pale spectre
 From the tomb of kings :

And the still small voice of early breezes

And the pipe of birds is heard amongst the trees :

The blue eye of the sky looks clearly through
 Great opens in the strong and stately roof.

And something seems to whisper in mine ear,
Yea, "Weak things hath God chosen,
To bring to naught things that are :
That no flesh should glory"—
"Never glory," sang the thrush upon the wall :
The sparrow, on the fair young head above the door,
Chirps "Never glory."

M. A. B.

MELROSE, *Sept.* 1877.



VASHTI'S DECISION.

THE great Ahasuerus
Sat in his golden palace,
In the third year of his reign;
And all the might of Media
Awaited at his call,
And the princes of proud Persia
Were carousing in his hall.

Thus great Ahasuerus
Within his gorgeous palace
In the young pride of his reign,
With feasting and carousing
Did wile his life away;—
Until of Vashti thinking,
“She'll not dare to disobey.”

Out spoke Ahasuerus,
“Ho, bring the Queen to me,
Let her wear our royal purple
With a crown of jewels rare;
We would gaze upon her beauty
For, princes, she is fair—
As in person so in duty.”

Thus spoke Ahasuerus,
 And his chamberlain did purpose
 To obey the Royal will—
 “The queen shall quickly come,”
 For King and minister forgot
 (As dull as to this day are some)
 That woman mind, and soul had got.

No, Vashti will not come.
 “I am queen of this great kingdom,
 I’m not an helpless toy.
 Sooner the crown from off my brow
 I’ll cast at the monarch’s feet,
 And all his gilded trappings throw
 Before the ivory seat.

“Lo, great Ahasuerus,
 I disobey thee thus ;
 I’m weary of thy hollow mirth,
 I am nor proud nor fine,
 But sad for my lost life ;
 I’ll be no more thy concubine,
 Nor e’en thy favourite wife.”

NEAR DAMASCUS.

I'LL flee me away to my home in the hills,
 I'll seek my father's tent ;
 Where white sheep drank of sparkling rills,
 The vines with clusters bent :
 Where cloud-swept hillsides circle round
 My childhood's home so fair,
 And all the smiling steppes are crowned
 With fruits and spices rare ;
 Where feath'ry palms lend grateful shade
 To golden birds of gorgeous hue
 Within each flow'ry glade ;
 Each shining morn their songs renew,
 They carol, till on fairy car
 Upon the living blue,
 Trembles the evening star.

But oh, 'tis not that nature's charms
 My weary heart beguile,
 I'd fly unto my father's arms,
 Bask in his loving smile.
 The pleasure pure and chaste be mine,
 His holy steps with care to tend

Along the path that more doth shine,
Where the grey willows weeping bend.
All leisurely with him to pace,
And tell how dear his love has been,
How Vashti longed to see his face
Since she has been a queen.



BETHANY SCENES.

BLEST Bethany, thy vines and olive shades, how
dear !

Most dear to those who love the One, who oft at
evening's close,

Ascended by thy flower-strewn paths beneath the
stars

To pray throughout the long and lonesome night.

Blest trysting-place, whence came the angelic minister;

Most holy ground, night's mystery enshrouds thee !

Nor eyes of man, nor human thought, nor pen of
mine

Dare dally round such scenes of woe, of human weak-
ness,

Met by the strength Divine, and love that triumphed
over pain.

Again, when morning, shining o'er thy pearl-sown
sward,

Was seen against the clear blue sky,

The Prince of Peace descending lone

From his lov'd vigils, midst thy shady solitudes.—

And when again the calm soft hush of evening fell
around,

How doubly dear such hours to Lazarus and Mary ;
For then oftentimes a lowly band were seen
To wend them towards thy stony roofs and whited
walls,

Led by their much-loved Lord and gentle master,
To rest in holy converse round the happy board,
Spread for them by the hospitable Martha ;—
Graced, mayhap, with the blooming grape and luscious
fig of Bethany.

In after years how dear such recollection was
To the meek Mary, to Martha, and to Lazarus ;
For oh ! their spirits then escaped from earth,
And all earth's sordid cares, beyond the realms of
time,

Upon the very wings of joy they sped,
Like happy doves, to carol on the golden altar of
their God ;—

Fed erstwhile with those visions true by Him
Who lived to love, who died to save,
And e'er He died would tell His loved ones of the
place

He would prepare for them.

PEACE ON EARTH, GOODWILL TO MEN.

JESUS, Saviour, smile upon us
In our life's bright morning time ;
Thou wilt ne'er forsake nor leave us
Till we reach the heavenly clime.

Jesus, Saviour, teach, oh teach us,
How to do Thy will on earth,
With "Thy Peace," oh deign to bless us,
Promise of Thy lowly birth.

In life's joys, and in life's sorrows,
We would hold Thy piercé hand,
Lest we should forsake or grieve Thee
E'er we reach the promised land.



SONG.—THE SECRET.

OH sea, now seething on the coast,
 By the wild north wind swayed and toss'd ;
 Oh pine-trees, waving in the blast,
 That drives the darkened cloudlet past ;
 Fair moon, now peeping overhead,
 By kindred planets onward led—
 List, someone is coming to love and to bless.

Ye velvet pansies, primrose white,
 Ye blue-eyed stars that glad the sight,
 And brimming roses, perfume fed,
 And red fruit dropping o'er the bed,
 And small white bells that ever ring
 Whilst little birds good morrow sing—
 List, someone is coming to love and to bless.

Ye mountain summits, tow'ring high
 With whited peak against the sky ;
 And thund'ring avalanche that brawls
 By lonely cot and lordly halls ;
 Ye crystal rills, that seek the lake,
 Flowing along by bush and brake—
 List, someone is coming to love and to bless.

Hush, boding owl from out the wood,
Hush, bird and bee and insect brood ;
Hush, ring-dove cooing from the wall,
Hush, wind and wave and waterfall ;
I hear a sound, now loud, now less—
Yon trampling hoofs sound plainly—Yes,
Someone has come back to love and to bless !



SONG.—ELYSIUM.

IN boyhood's days, I roamed a field,
 The sun shone bright above me,
 And in my home, with gentle tone,
 Did one caress and love me.
 They fledted past, those joyous days,
 In dreams of future glories,
 When I should be a man, and free
 To join with Whigs or Tories.
 Quoth Solomon, long years ago,
 There's nothing new beneath the sun ;
 Young joys, that bloomed for you and me,
 May bloom again eternally.

Now, older grown, I dream of love,
 The white clouds drift above me ;
 My mother's well-loved voice I hear,
 But other tones enthrall me.
 How swiftly sped those summer days,
 To youthful lads and lasses,
 A-gath'ring roses, chasing moths,
 Athwart the leaves and grasses.

Quoth Solomon, long years ago,
 There's nothing true beneath the sun ;
 The fleeting joys we oft-times miss
 May make us meet for future bliss.

To manhood grown, I seek my love,
 To find her coy and wilful,
 She will, she won't, she can't say yes,
 She makes me feel quite sinful.
 Yet quickly pass'd those autumn days
 In dreams of future blisses,
 When Effie, as my plighted bride,
 Would not refuse my kisses.

Quoth Solomon, long years ago,
 There's nothing new beneath the sun ;
 A fleeting joy that oft we miss
 May make us meet for future bliss.

Upon life's mountain top I stand
 And look for work and glory,
 To live "a life," to be "a man,"
 Through time's clear-written story ;
 Then, hand in hand with her I love,
 By hill or stream I'd go,
 To find the haven and the rest
 Of all who love below.

Quoth Solomon, long years ago,
There's nothing new beneath the sun ;
The joys we count as dead and past
Are foretaste of those joys that last.



SONG.—THINK, LOVE, OF ME.

THINK, love, of me when twilight falls,
Nor over sad, nor gay ;
Think of me when all living calls
Are silent for the day.
Mine own, draw towards thy lonely hearth
Whilst sways the ashen bough,
And everywhere o'er sky and earth
Shadows are falling now.

Then think of me, with eyes above,
For I would be to thee
A twinkling star of night, my love,
Shining above the sea !
And think of me with thoughts of light,
For if I only be
To thee a creature pure and bright,
What's all this world to me !



L'EMBARRAS.

ROSA fled to her rosy bower,
Around bloomed many a dainty flower,
The larkspur, tulip, the white lily,
The marigold, lupin, and peony.

Quoth Rosa, " Oh, I wish I knew
What to say to him who comes to sue,
Oh tell me, flowers, I beg and pray,
How best to look, what's best to say."

The peony blushed a great big blush,
And hid her head behind a bush,
" With maiden modesty like mine,
Sweet Rosa, you would look divine !"

The lily swayed her graceful spray,
And turned her whited cups away,
" With grace like mine and dignity
Meet him, who comes to sue to thee."

A primrose grew at the lattice side
With her white blossoms well supplied,
And on the lowly flowerets see,
The dewdrops rest in purity !

“ Dear flowers, tell me yet, I pray,
What words to Rodolph I shall say ? ”
With simple truth, in lowliness,
Rosa, confess thy willingness !



WIRASTHRUE.

AN IRISH SONG.

SMALL cowslip bells are swinging,
 Pale primroses a-springing—
 And little lilies welling,
 Sweet odours beyond telling,
 But I am all alone, Wirasthrue !

The little stream is flowing
 Mid cresses greenly growing,
 And as it slowly creeps along
 It babbles out a little song,
 But I am all alone, Wirasthrue !

The may-buds now are bursting,
 The songsters are a-building—
 And oh, the sky is blue and white
 And everything is looking bright,
 But I am all alone, Wirasthrue !

For Pat he's gone and left me,
And of his love bereft me,—
And till I find another lad
(For sure, there's plenty to be had,)
Oh, I am all alone, Wirasthrue!

And when my love I find him,
I'll weave a spell, I'll bind him,
For tho' it slipt off precious Pat,
Oh, who would break their heart for that?
I'd sooner be alone!—Wirasthrue!



SONG.—WAITING ANGELS.

I COME, love, with the first pale star,
To hold my tryst with thee,
For I am true, and from afar
My spirit yearns to thee !

There is a power dwells in the air,
Where throbs each loving heart,
And evening breezes pure and rare
Such influence can impart.

I see thee hieing now unto
The place our vows were told,
Where white sheep sail amidst the dew
Down in the calm of old.

Tho' far apart I know thee true,
And on this distant shore
I kneel me down with thee to pray,
That we may meet once more.

And gentle angels waiting by,
Those prayers bear to the throne,
For sure, my darling, you and I
Ne'er hold our tryste alone !

M. A. B.

TO MY FAVOURITE FLOWER—
THE COWSLIP.

LITTLE nest of golden stars
Upon a slender stalk,
I would thy yellow petals
Had a tongue wherewith to talk,
I'd ask thee, why I love thee.—
Is it that thy perfume
Is gifted with the art,
To speak a silent language
Unto the saddest heart,
In seeking Heaven above me?
For with thy mysterious odour
Of joys that might have been,
Flower, thou hintest strangely
Of joys that are unseen,
And dost to Heaven point me.—
Mayhap thou wouldest tell me
There is a land beyond death's sea,
Where gushing springs untasted
May flow again for me.
Or, flower, would'st thou teach me

To cease yearning o'er the past,
And to garner up my treasured hopes,
Where my future lot is cast.
Tho' not on earth—for here remains
At most a transient time ;
But in the fair perspective
Of yon calm and restful clime.—
 Oh to wear a flow'ry crown
 In those regions of renown,
 There to read thy perfume truly,
 There to learn why I choose thee.

M. A. B.

29, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin.

March, 1860.



URIEL'S VISIT.

'Twas a vision of the night,
An angel took mine hand,
"Towards yon regions of delight,
We seek the heavenly land."
Then methought the fanning ether
Enveloped us as a nest ;
And I feared no more the teacher,
Who set my fears at rest.
We were wafted towards the portals
Of pearl and purest gold ;
But the weak eyes of mortals
Could not such light behold.
Oh, I know what I felt that day,
But I know not how 'twill be,
That each young tender joy of May
Shall live on eternally ;
For ever, new-made by Him who saith,
Each thing in its season bright,
Ev'ry creature of mine shall live by faith,
And rejoice in my perfect light ;

I pass'd thro' those gates of gold,
 Led on by that being bright,
 And he raised o'er mine eyes one flowing fold
 From his frosted robe of light.
 Then I felt we moved 'neath the brightness
 Of Him who sits on the throne,
 And another fold of whiteness
 O'er mine eyes did the light entone.
 Methought now a bright archangel
 Conversed with my gentle guide.
 He said, " Are the jewels well ? "
 And spoke of a coming " Bride."
 Then to me—" Say, wouldst thou gather
 A diadem for our King ?—
 Away, then go both together,
 To seek for each precious thing."
 Once again the pure cool ether
 Enwrapp'd us, as a nest,
 And I clung to my kindly teacher
 As I lay in his arms at rest :
 My head on his shoulder brave,
 And ever the wind's mad rout
 A-stirring the gushing wave
 Of his glorious golden hair,
 And far amidst cloud palaces
 Entoning everywhere.

And many a brilliant world
 We passed in our downward course,
 And many a comet hurled
 By God's resistless force :
 And e'en my thralléd senses
 Revived midst the stirring spell
 A-gushing through roseate fences
 Aurora's bright farewell,
 A-tending now our chariot light
 Towards the gentle moon,
 The gay green earth's fair satellite—
 “ My home,” I cry, “ so soon !
 I leave thee now, my angel guide,
 A kind, not last farewell.”—
 “ Oh no, I cannot leave thy side,”
 Quoth gentle Uriel—
 “ Hereafter thou may'st walk thro' space,
 And pace the lambent moon,
 A strong one girded for the race
 Of life's unclouded noon.
 Now thou art weak and wayward,
 Thou need'st a guiding hand,
 God loves thee, for thy safeguard
 Hath placed me in command ;—
 To guide thee, to protect thee,
 To keep thee in thy ways ;

United thro' infinity

God's creatures are, He says ;—

Art thou a brother's keeper ?

Then sure as fall the leaves,

When pallid Death, God's reaper,

Doth bind thee in his sheaves,

Thou'lt wear a jewel for thy crown,

As thou shalt be for mine ;

We have ' well done,' our God shall own,

Our mission 'twas divine.—

Then gather each pearly seed,

Each gorgeous blushing gem,

To every tender trust take heed,

For God too waits for them."

M. A. B.



THE MIRTHFUL BEE.

BUZZING bee, on busy wing,
 Whither art thou journeying,
 Gathering thy sweetest store
 E'er thy summer day is o'er ?
 Wisely storing, like a sage,
 For the winter of thine age ?
 Replies the bee, " I'm young, and gay,
 I would be, whilst I may,
 Leaving such wisdom for the sages
 Youthful sport my mind engages.
 I mean to dress myself for court,
 Our Queen within her waxen fort,
 Proclaims a levée for to-day,
 My devoirs I go to pay.
 A summer robe of purest white .
 The lily lends me for to-night,
 The centre of all eyes, I ween,
 In my new robes I shall be seen ;
 To hide my velvet for a time
 In summer, will not be a crime."
 Ah ! for the story I've to tell,—

Full doleful is my sad sequel :
He would eclipse his fellows, lo !
They take him for a foreign foe ;
They tear his white robe, sting him sore,
A mirthful bee he'll be no more !!
Maidens by this sad event,
And its summary punishment,
I would teach you one and all
To be wise and natural ;
God hath made you as you are,
Useful bee, or lily rare !



THE MOURNER'S SONG.

"OUR Father," to my youthful mind,
That name meant all that's good and kind ;
From morn to night I sailed along
The stream of life with joy and song.

"Our Father," when to manhood grown,
That name I never did disown ;
It helped me on in peace and love
Like sunshine beaming from above.

My Father, then I learned to know,
That life was not all joy below ;
And they who would be children still
Must cleave to Thee through good and ill.

My Father, grant Thy peace again,
And let no bitter root remain ;
Oh, wash and cleanse me from my sin,
And make me clean and pure within.

My Father, now I bear Thy sign,
A mark to show that I am thine ;
My sorrow, dealt me from Thy hand,
Has marked me for the better land.

HOLD THOU ME UP.

WHEN I walk through sunlit spaces,
Sing the birds and soar above,
And the roses from their places
Nod to me their fragrant love ;
And the fruit-trees, rich and comely,
By the balmy breeze are fann'd,
When my home is happy, homely,
Then, oh Jesus, hold mine hand.

When some loved one I discover,
Walking in Thy ways of peace,
And our hearts are drawn together
As our worldly gifts increase ;
When we scatter joys around us,
O'er the poor, the sad, the lone,
Those we love the most surround us,
Then, oh Jesus, lead Thine own.

Soon the time must come, oh Father,
When the valley dark I pace,
I would not despond, the rather
Haste to see Thy loving face.

But I'm leaving those who love me,
Entering the great unknown,
Lest the water-floods appal me,
Then, oh Saviour, keep Thine own.



SONG.—“GONE BEFORE.”

EVER the same, from this heart's deep well,
 Tho' in silence I walk, with none to heed,
 With never a hand that can help me now,
 And never a voice my grief to tell;
 Yet there's sweetness still in this utmost need,
 For through depth and thro' darkness a voice doth
 call—

'Tis the voice of him, my all in all.

Ever the same, when the garish noon
 Shineth hotly down on each tender bloom,
 When the young green grass is lying low,
 And every blossom is bowed too soon :
 And I think of the willow that hangs o'er the tomb ;
 Yet a voice thro' life's shadows doth tenderly call—
 'Tis the voice of him, my all in all.

Ever the same, tho' around me still
 Throng the young, the gay, with hearts aglow,
 Tho' the cup of life be brimming o'er,
 And I've gained the top of life's highest hill ;
 Yet alone on the hill-top I silently go,
 For the voice from the valley that sweetest doth call—
 Is the voice of him, my all in all.

Jubilee, 1887.

SONG.—“EXPECTATION.”

I AM watching thro' my casement
 For the first streaks of the dawn,
 I am peering thro' the darkness
 Over hill, and vale, and lawn ;
 And I watch all thro' the long night,
 When the weary ones repose,
 Till he comes to ope my cage door,
 To the wooing of the rose !

I am waiting with all patience,
 Through the rain, and snow, and sleet,
 I am waiting for the summer,
 For the fruit and waving wheat ;
 Till he comes to ope my cage door,
 And to set my spirit free,
 And to lead me where his schooner
 Rides the distant azure sea !

I am waiting, all so lonely,
 In my little prison here,
 The bars are all around me,
 But my spirit's far and near,

Where the heather and the wild thyme
 Bedeck the mountain sweet—
We are travelling on together
 Where the dawn and daylight meet.



A SUMMER'S DREAM.

A SHADOWED plain of golden grain,
 A field of yellow oats,
 A blue sea breaking o'er the main,
 Rocking two little boats.
 Two figures wand'ring hand-in-hand
 By greenest sward and sunny land,
 One strong, one weak, one head, one heart,
 Two roses on one stalk apart.
 Ah me, to live alone !

Of strawberries a leaf heaped up,
 A cool and sheltered spot,
 Of yellow cream a full-brimmed cup,
 Twin ferns in one grot.
 A skylark soaring in the morn
 Above the plains of dewy corn,
 White butterflies amid the beds,
 Where poppies shake their scarlet heads.
 Ah me, the sultry town !

Upon the hill the purple heath,
 The bee to suck all day,
 And with white sail, blue depths beneath,
 A yacht runs down the bay.

A sportsman on a green hill-side,
Lies dreaming thro' the summer tide ;
With dog and gun, can take his fill
Of rest upon yon thymy hill.
I fain with him would roam !

The bloom upon the grapes aglow,
Twin peaches blushing red ;
The velvet buds to scarlet grow,
White jessamine o'erhead.
The sun by day, the moon by night,
Shine brilliantly and bright,
To light the rich man everywhere,
To show him every sight that's fair.
The poor must stay at home !



THE WIDOW'S LAMENT.

I WALKED on the sands at sundown,
 And I said, "I am all alone,
 And here I may pause and ponder
 As I sit on this old grey stone.
 I am free of the vain, the silly,
 And hushed is their chatt'ring now,
 My babe is asleep with the lily,
 The damp locks on his brow.

But if he were with me, darling !
 He would sit by me in the balm,
 And not even ask for a story
 To break our sweet evening calm.
 For the spirit of his great sires
 Doth dwell in my little son,
 He is patient, and shy, and loving,
 Altho' he is full of fun.

And only I have him left me
 From the treasure who's gone above,
 I could sit on this stone for ever,
 And weep for my one lost love.

The gorgeous sun is sinking,
Now dipping beneath the wave,
Oh ! would I could cease repining
For one who is laid in his grave.

Oh, husband who loved me truly,
I am only a bruised reed,
And but that my life is yonder
This poor heart would break indeed ;
I miss thee at ev'ry turning,
My darling who worked for me !
Beyond, where yon clouds are burning,
I shall fly to far worlds with thee."



RESIGNATION.

THERE'S a path on the waters shining,
Which leadeth across the sea,
A burnished golden pathway
Between my love and me.—
The measured wavelets breaking,
Come sighing unto my feet,
And shadows now are pointing
From him towards my lone seat.

There is but one step between us,
One dark and stormy night,
Then I'll gird myself to brave it,
And keep my lamp alight.
The burdened heart beats faintly,
The lamp is burning dim,
But a strong hand thro' the darkness
Doth help me on to him.

There is but one Saviour for us,
One friend to lead us on,
From Him all help proceedeth,
We're each with Him alone.

He will stand with us at sundown,
Beside the shining shore,
And bid each happy pilgrim
Lean on Him more and more.

LARGS, *August* 31, 1874.



A HEAVENLY VISITANT.

HE came, he touched mine eyes, he spake to me,
 "Arise," he said, "poor prisoner, come away :
 Not now the heavenly bulwarks we shall scale,
 Nor midst refreshing ozone take our way ;
 Where distant planets plough their star-strewn path,
 Encompassed by bright suns, their satellites,
 Cerulean blue, pure amethyst, or green
 As emerald, set in orbs of gold.—
 Not far above earth's murky ways our path
 Doth lead, e'en within earshot of her voice
 Discordant, harsh,—her million moaning voice
 Of misery, where pris'ners sigh their hearts away,
 Where the poor seamstress plies her weary task,
 Where sin and shame and vice still flaunt their
 draggled plumes
 Beneath the glare—or haply once again,
 Where true and loving tones in concert blend,
 And infancy's shrill pipes are heard
 Re-echoing gaily thro' the corridors
 And halls of stately mansions :
 Or where the mother bends a graceful head

Above her kneeling babe, lisp'ing a prayer.

* * * * *

Be thou a disembodied sprite, to sight
 Invisible—ride thou with me," quoth Uriel.
 On, on we swept above the cities, streets,
 Where the dim gas-lamps struggled thro' the gloom.
 "Let's enter here," he said ; and soon amidst
 Earth's sturdy sons of toil we found ourselves,
 Within a hall : upon the platform raised
 Their spokesman stood, a strong and stalwart man,
 Wearing his manhood's prime, and bearing on his
 brow

His maker's image—Ah me, 'twas pain to hear
 The words he spake !—"There is no God," he said,
 "No Christ, no heaven, no immortality.

Be true men to yourselves, seek to no higher God ;
 For oh, more god-like are ye, more kind and true,
 Than the great God, if such there be, who cannot
 Aught forgive to erring man unless He slay
 The innocent, whetting a vengeful sword
 In the red blood of Him who did no wrong ;
 And calls that Justice !—ye are more just."

In academic garb, upon the platform
 Great Uriel now stands—and speaks.

"What are these great and swelling words I hear !
 Who dares disown the One in Whom he lives,

And moves, and hath his being ?

His laws, say you, are cruel, strange, unjust,

Who hath the heavy penalty paid ?

HIMSELF. The Son and Father being One.

He died for man upon the Cross of Calvary,

The innocent for the guilty, the strong one

For the weak—Who dares arraign before earth's
bar

The One who is a law unto Himself ?

The mainspring of all law, the origin of thought.

All things, both great and small, are ordered,

Planned by the Almighty Intellect ;

No sparrow falls without His ordering."

The Angel ceased to speak.

Replies the first, " I am an atheist ;

Hath God planned *me* ? "

" Hast thou a god-like intellect ? Art patient,

Brave, and honest ? Who made thee so ?

Listen unto the voice of God—*thy* God.

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words

Without knowledge ? Gird up now thy loins like a
man,

For I will demand of thee, answer thou me.

Where wast thou when I laid the earth's foun-
dations ?

Or who laid the corner-stone thereof,

When the morning stars sang together,
 And all the sons of God shouted for joy ?
 Or who shut up the sea with doors when it brake
 forth,
 As if it had issued out of the womb ?
 When I made the cloud the garment thereof,
 And thick darkness a swaddling-band for it,
 Set bars and doors and said, Hitherto shalt thou
 come,
 But no further, and here shalt thy proud waves be
 stayed.
 Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea,
 Or hast thou walked in search of the depth ?
 Have the gates of death been opened unto thee,
 Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death ?
 Hast thou entered into the treasures of snow,
 Or hast thou seen the treasures of hail ?
 By what way is the light parted,
 Which scattereth the east wind upon the earth ?
 Who hath divided a watercourse
 For the overflowing of waters,
 Or a way for the lightning of thunder ?
 Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds
 That abundance of water may cover thee,
 Canst thou send lightnings that they may go
 And say unto thee, Behold us ?

Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts,
 Or who hath given understanding to the heart ?
 Gavest thou goodly feathers unto the peacock,
 Or wings and feathers unto the ostrich ?
 Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom
 And stretch her wings towards the south ?
 Doth the eagle mount up at thy command
 And make her nest on high ?
 Gird up now thy loins like a man,
 I will demand of thee, declare thou unto me ;
 Dost thou disannul God's judgment,
 Dost thou condemn Him !
 That thou mayest be righteous ?
 Hast thou an arm like God,
 Or canst thou thunder with a voice like Him ?
 Deck thyself now with majesty,
 Array thyself with glory and beauty ;
 Look on ev'ry one that is proud,
 And abase him.
 Tread down the wicked in their place,`
 Hide them in the dust together,
 And bind their faces in secret ;
 Then will I also confess unto thee
 That thine own right hand can save thee."

M. A. B.

BRIGHTON, *November* 11, 1887.

A PSALM OF WINTER.

GOD of the stormy cloud,
 Rolling Thy voice abroad,
 List to our cry !

God, over snowy plains
 Drifting Thy wintry rains,
 Lowly we lie.

God of the sighing pines,
 When the old year declines,
 Thou'rt still the same.

God, midst the roaring blast,
 Bending the gallant mast,
 Whisper Thy name.

God of the sere green waves
 Tow'ring o'er lonely graves,
 For Thee we sigh.

God in our sorest need,
 Binding each broken reed,
 Bending from high.

God of the "still small voice,"
 Making the earth rejoice,
 Mighty "I am."

God, of the flow'ry spring
Starring each tiny thing,
Clothing each lamb.

God, at the set of sun
Folding each shorn one,
Thee do we seek.

Help of the contrite heart,
Taking each weak one's part,
Blessing the meek.

Pity our blinded eyes,
When thoughts of Thee arise,
Oh, deign to help.

Show us Thy loving heart,
Great Father, as Thou art,
Show Thy true self.

And in our helplessness
When we Thy name confess,
Thrill with Thy love.

Let us but work for Thee,
Thy love in Jesus see,
Father above.

October 21, 1866.

AN EVENING DREAM.

Methought along green cliffs at set of sun
 I walked, beneath me lay the sleeping ocean,
 And broad rays from the great sun that sank to rest
 Lit up the west, and burnished all the path
 That stretched across the waters towards me :
 Whilst standing on those heights I watched the clouds,
 Sailing like fairy ships along the skies ;
 Trailing their graceful forms athwart the clear,
 The crystaline, o'erarching vault of heav'n ;
 By angel fingers painted o'er and toned
 From the clear blue, to pearl and purest gold,
 Just streaked and touched with greens and violets,
 By greys and reds blurred o'er the brilliance of the
 south.

* * * * *

The sun sank slowly—then he came,
 In spirit unto me, I knew not whence,
 But felt a staying arm around me placed ;
 And I was led along a velvet sward
 Towards a path that verged unto the shore.
 Anon we pace a ridge of firm, dry sand,
 Beyond where the receding wavelets writ

In white their names upon the beach,
 To be in turn effaced by the abounding surge,
 Like each loved name from off life's lingering scroll.
 Now calm and pure as some blest saint !
 The fair moon shows her palid face on high,
 Trailing abroad her vestal garments, like a nun
 Whose chastened features shine as if in prayer.
 From heav'n, a radiance catching from afar.
 A silver pathway stretches o'er the sea,
 And still his presence is anigh in that sweet silence,
 When souls, entranced, drink in the night's chaste
 influence.

'Twas then methought I sudden spake to him :
 " A boat," I said ; " I would by moonlight sail."
 He did not say me nay to such request,
 For he but lived and breathed to pleasure me.
 And as we smoothly moved across those waters vast,
 His dearest presence brooded still o'er mine.
 But when I woke from sleep, all, all was gone !
 The thought alone remained from such a dream,
 The God who sent it me can bring it true,
 On earth or heaven above ; for all I love,
 For him and me. Amen.

BOULOGNE-SUR-MER,
October, 1883.

DEGREES OF BEAUTY.

METHOUGHT I trod a grassy plain
 Diamond bedewed,
 And midst the grass were lilies
 Decked with snow ;
 Above the lilies apple-trees in blow,
 And 'neath the lilies violets,
 Among the violets low
 Green moss and simple daisies.
 I said in heaven it will be so—
 Some as the grass shall be,
 And others like to lilies,
 E'en daisy, moss, and violet fair,
 And od'rous apple-trees
 Shall be there.

LONDON, *May 4th*, 1865.



OUR FOREFATHERS.

THE NOBLE ARMY OF MARTYRS.

THEY are gone but not lost, ah no !
 In God's own smile they rest,
 And their robes are whited now,
 In the stream from Jesus' breast,—
 And we feel their presence nigh
 As we toil in the noontide hot,
 And a glint from the hills on high,
 Gleams over our lowly lot.
 They never would bend to a lie,
 The law of truth was their law ;—
 And we see them eye to eye
 Who with vision keen foresaw,
 Mid the loss of all, and the shame,
 Mid the glare and the hollow show,
 The falseness of this world's fame.
 They are dead but not lost, ah no !
 In God's own smile they rest,
 And their robes are whited now,
 In the stream from Jesus' breast,—
 And we feel their presence nigh,

As we sit in the twilight grey,
When the fair moon reigns on high
At the close of a busy day.—
Dear Lord, may we follow still
Our loved ones, seen plainly—
By the narrow path on the hill
Which led them up to Thee.



OUR CHRISTMAS CASKET.

WHERE are gems of purest whiteness,
 Or the gorgeous Kohinoor,
 Are they em'rald, ruby, diamond,
 Spoil of harem, Turk or Moor ?

Did they ever grace the tresses
 Of a fair maid of Cashmere,
 When a Pashaw paid addresses
 At a feast of roses there ?

On the white neck of a fav'rite
 Did they shed their sparkling rays,
 Did she wear them in the red light
 Of a loathed one's hated gaze !

Did he into slav'ry buy her,
 All the sum of her sad life,
 Was it to deck in such attire
 The sham of a true wife ?

Oh ! our jewel-case is set not
 With such worthless things as these,
 Brighter far the gems t'at we've got
 Shining midst our Christmas leaves.

We have gifts of tried affection,
We have loving tones and true,
We have looks we love to gaze on
From dark orbs, or grey or blue.

Round our Christmas hearths they gather,
Gentle, loving, lowly hearts,
Linked by sympathy together,
Crowned by childhood's artless arts.

Where the golden store of treasure,
Where the jewel-case or mine
With one look of love to measure,
One dear look of love divine !



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